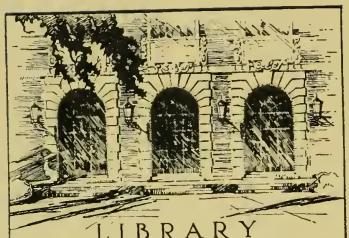

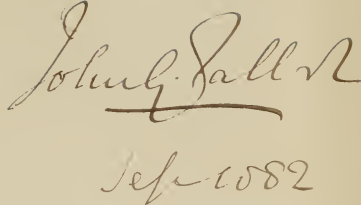

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RELATION TO RELIGION.

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BY THE

REV. J. M. WILSON, M.A.,

HEAD MASTER OF CLIFTON COLLEGE.

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MORALITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND ITS RELATION TO RELIGION.[1]

A FRAGMENT.

THE subject which I have chosen needs no apology. It concerns every member of our Society, and touches on the principles and practice of the whole profession. I deeply regret that, from want of leisure, as well as from other causes, I am wholly unable to do more than break ground in it.

Public School education is, of course, but one phase of our national education; but it is so very closely connected, on the one hand, with our whole political, moral, and social condition, and, on the other hand, with all other educational bodies and systems, with Universities, with Private and Preparatory Schools, and, even with the education adopted in Girls' Schools, that, in discussing any great question connected with Public Schools, there is no one engaged in education who can say that the subject does not concern him. Further,

[1] Delivered as the Presidential Address to the Education Society, November 1, 1881.

Public Schools are becoming more and more important as a factor in national higher education. The Great Schools grow larger and larger; twenty years have seen a considerable increase to their number and magnitude, and they do not seem even yet to have reached their limit. Private Schools are, on the contrary, tending to become preparatory to Public Schools.

Now, Public School education has become what it is, partly, of course, as a result of the reaction on it of society as a whole. It is an outcome of the national genius and traditions; its merits and defects are those of the nation, and of the particular time in which we write. This is obvious. But let it also be remembered that schools are not mere passive recipients of external influences: they are strong enough in themselves, and influential enough by their position, to be themselves, a power, a reaction on society. They are in the hands of persons presumably specially intelligent and public-spirited, drawn not from any narrow section of society or clique, clerical or social, but representative as a whole of the widest and most enlightened culture and thought; and hence they have a real function in the nation, if they can but rightly formulate it. It is in this aspect that we are bound to regard our work, not as results of society, but as powers to affect it: within no narrower limits lie our work and our responsibility. This responsibility lies chiefly on the Head-masters of the Public Schools *par excellence;* but, in their degree, on all Head-masters, and on all Masters; in a word, on all who take part in education in any form.

The saying of Wilhelm von Humboldt will occur to many of us, that, whatever we wish to see introduced

into the life of a nation, must be first introduced into its schools. This is the real text of my discourse.

It is a wide subject. According to this, we must look to schools for a revival of simplicity of life; for training in truth and moral courage; for real intellectual training; for giving men the power of hard thought, of seeing things as they are; and not giving only a superficial culture and a positive distaste for the unsymmetrical facts of life. The schools must educate the young to keen social and political interests; must bind classes together in an unselfishness that is often wanting in the weary pleasure-seeking classes: in a word, must revive public spirit. The schools must give that self-restraint of the body, that purity of moral tone and conduct, that moral horror of degradation, on which, more than anything else, the welfare, of the nation depends. And, lastly, the schools must educate, develop, guide, and instruct that spiritual faculty in the child and boy, which, by whatever name we call it, is supreme.

Papers on great subjects like these, the national needs, and the power of schools to do something to supply them, and their lamentable shortcomings in not a few of these respects, may well occupy the attention of your Society. I shall to-day touch on one only, on the question of morality, and its connection with religious teaching, and on the duty and possibilities of schools to affect the morality of the country. What I can say will be, I foresee, a very incomplete fragment.

It must, I believe, be admitted as a fact, that immorality, used in a special sense, which I need not

define, has been of late increasing among the upper classes in England, and specially in the great cities. Those who have the best opportunities of knowing, who can from personal knowledge compare the tone of society now with that of twenty, thirty, forty years ago, speak most positively of this deterioration. This is not the place to give details or evidence. There is amply sufficient ground for alarm that the nation may be on the eve of an age of voluptuousness and reckless immorality. Even if the phenomena of so-called philosophy, as well as of practice, which lead many thoughtful people to this conclusion, be otherwise interpreted; if the increase is not real, but only apparent, and due to the greater publicity of life, it remains none the less true that it is the business of schools to prepare boys to face this evil. When one reflects that the present immorality is due to those who have left school within the last thirty or forty years, it is impossible not to speculate whether something could not have been done during those years to have diminished the existing evil. It is surely the duty of schools *venienti occurrere morbo*. I do not think it can be doubted that the immorality of manhood is often a direct consequence of earlier immorality.

I have said that there are grounds for fearing that immorality is on the increase among the wealthier classes. But it must be carefully noted, as a sign that education is not without a direct influence on conduct in this respect, that at the Universities,—I mean at Oxford and Cambridge,—this is not the case. There is, I believe, a fair consensus of opinion,—I think, an entire consensus of well-qualified opinion,—that the

Universities are better than they were, and have a standard distinctly higher than that of any similar aggregate of men, higher, that is, than the standard of the individuals of which it is composed. The traditions and influence of the society act as an appreciable check on its members. Of course, these are most felt in those colleges which are most representative of the University, for it is well known that the difference between one college and another is great in this as in other respects.

Further, it must be noted that the morality of Public School men as a whole is the best. At the Universities a fair comparison can be made between the moral effect of the education of the large Public Schools, and of the private and smaller schools, and the verdict is distinctly in favour of the Great Schools taken as a class. It is of importance to my purpose to insist on this point; otherwise it might be inferred, from my choice of a subject, that I think the Public Schools are the chief offenders. *I believe that the very opposite is the case;* that, while what I have to say applies in very different degrees to all of them, it applies with still more force to other schools. And I attribute the difference between one class of schools and another, and between the members of the same class (it being remembered that the boys are of the same social rank), chiefly, if not exclusively, to the degree of insight into moral conditions, the sense of responsibility for those conditions, and the spiritual force to control them, which have characterized, in the past and present, the men who as head and assistant masters have been in charge of those schools.

Let us now proceed to examine into the causes, so far as they are remediable, for a low standard of school morality, and their remedies, as far as they can be gathered by experience. I cannot pretend to deal with this subject exhaustively. I can only speak of one class of schools. Doubtless the masters of Middle Class schools meet the same problem, and it would be most instructive to us to hear how they face it.

One of the causes of immorality is idleness and luxurious living. This, at any rate, the schools can to some extent deal with. It is necessary, from this point of view alone, that fare should be simple (meat once a day is better than twice), that great temperance in the use of alcoholic liquor, if not indeed total abstinence from it, should be secured; that discipline should be good; industry essential; exercise abundant, carried on up to the point of fatigue, two or three times a week; and that time should be fully occupied. Nothing to do is the parent of vice of all sorts. That a boy should be bored at school, from the monotony or the absence of employment, is a blot on the school, because it is a great danger to the boy. It is the business of masters to provide both work and play, and, what is more difficult, a variety of rational and interesting voluntary occupations, which are intermediate between work and play, which occupy time, which fill the thoughts, and break up those deadly blank times in which evil germs breed.[1]

[1] I find I have unconsciously almost quoted this sentence from a most valuable article on Rugby, in the *New Quarterly Magazine*, for October, 1879, p. 273, written by one who had some real experience, and was not without enthusiasm.

Again, it is necessary that what may be called the mechanical arrangements should be carefully attended to, in respect of dormitories and other places. I shall pass over this very important point without going into detail, though I hold very decided views on the subject; but I think it might be worth the while of the Head-masters' Conference to collect information and opinions on such mechanical arrangements, and on school moral sanitation generally, and digest it into a report for the use of the profession.

Let me, however, say at once, that no reliance must be placed on any mere mechanical arrangements. They may form *conditions* unfavourable to some forms of immorality, and we are bound therefore to secure them; but they cannot be regarded as *powers* and influences working for morality. Should any parent, anxious about the choice of a school, read this address, I would most seriously warn him not to attach much weight to the apparent excellence of arrangements. Some of the very worst schools have these arrangements in the highest perfection. They cannot afford to have them otherwise. Neat cubicles and spotless dimity have beguiled an uninterrupted sequence of mammas, and have kept alive, and even flourishing, schools which are in a thoroughly bad state, and are hopelessly inefficient in every particular. Of course, many a parent feels that he ought to judge for himself, and these mechanical arrangements are too often the only material on which he can form his judgment. Let me assure him that they are entirely untrustworthy.

We must go somewhat deeper. Some persons advocate a general teaching of physiology. They urge that, as

knowledge is sure to come, it is plainly better that it should come formally, seriously, from accredited teachers, and not be left to be picked up in a fragmentary way that most stimulates curiosity from the least desirable companions, and so be regarded as a guilty knowledge. They point out that it is the mystery, the secrecy, that forms one of the allurements to such knowledge. They would remove the mystery. The knowledge would be accompanied with proper warnings, and the evil would be checked at its source. This is a common view taken by younger men, and is therefore important.

I cannot, in the least, assent to their view. In the first place, I do not think its advocates take into account at how early an age such teaching would have to begin. It would not be at the Public Schools, it would be at the very earliest preparatory schools. Perhaps none but Public School masters and doctors are aware at how early an age such knowledge is acquired and in some instances bad habits begin. To the question which must sometimes be put, "Where did you learn this?" the answer invariably is, "At my first school." It follows, then, that such teaching, if it is to anticipate the evil, must be given at an age at which it would be practically impossible.

It is not, I think, credible that such teaching would do much to eradicate bad habits already formed. On the contrary, I feel sure it would promote them, partly from curiosity, partly from the consciousness that all the others had their thoughts turned in the same direction. The freedom of conversation that would follow would be an incalculable evil.

In the next place, whether the facts above stated be

admitted or denied, there is the fatal objection to the proposal, that it is so utterly repulsive to our nature to give this teaching that men and women of high character and refinement could not and would not do it. What sort of man would he be who would face a class on such a subject? A certain doctor pressed this method very strongly on the late head-master of one of our great schools, and he was met by the objection I am now urging. The doctor made light of it, saying he should at any rate teach his own son, then a fine open-faced youngster, before he went to school. Years after, they met again, and returned to the subject. "Did you teach your son as you intended?" was the question. "No," the answer was, "I found myself absolutely unable to begin." This is, I believe, a typical instance. I think the doctor was wrong. But if he could not teach his own son, how could he have taught a class?

Further, we have no reason for thinking that knowlegde would produce purity. There is, in fact, a good deal of experience open to any one, that would lead one to the opposite conclusion. A very large proportion of boys grow up in entire ignorance of certain forms of immorality. To mention these in the presence of such boys would be a great crime and cruelty. Whatever may be the right solution of the question, it is not in this quarter that we must look for it. There is, perhaps, an age at which some information may well be given, but it is not at this early age.

Another and very different solution is, for a master, or person *in loco magistri*, to have frequent private conversations with each boy, studying his individual temperament, ascertaining his special difficulties and faults,

and giving him the necessary instruction and warning. This is not open to the same fatal objection of publicity as the former method; but it has peculiar and great dangers of its own. It is, in fact—I do not use the terms in any invidious sense—the system of confession and direction. Now, if this method were not earnestly advocated and actually employed in certain schools, not necessarily under these names, it would not be worth while to discuss it. As facts are, however, it may be worth while to point out some of the objections to it.

To obtain a confession from a boy is an easy feat; but it is to tyrannize over the weak in his hour of weakness. A time will surely come when the boy will repent having given his confidence. It will have weakened him; for which of us will not admit, in his own case, that he derives strength for action, for self-recovery, for self-respect, from the fact of his sins being known to God only?

Again, it compels the boy's mind to recur to the subject; it keeps the fault in view; it is keeping him in a tainted atmosphere. The boy ought not to be compelled to revert to it. It ignores the one great truth on the whole subject, that the real safety from such sins is always to be found in flight. Temptations of the Devil we can fight; temptations of the world we can control: but temptations of the flesh we must flee from; and there is no other way of dealing with them. A struggling penitent, who is just safe by keeping the whole subject out of his thoughts, is perforce by such confession reminded of past sensual pleasure, and is weakened sometimes more by the memory than he is strengthened by the words of warn-

ing. One who is not penitent, and not struggling, of course gets harm unmixed with good.

Further, it is inevitable that such matters would come to be spoken of with a certain degree of conventionality, and this would be—indeed, I may truly say, *is*—most fatal. The tone of its being a matter-of-course is most deadly. The loss of respect for the master is certain. I attribute much of the evil at certain schools to this cause.

These objections would hold, even if the director were exceptionally gifted with sympathy and insight and purity. But what would be the case with the ordinary run of schoolmasters? Even if one could answer or counterbalance these objections, how many men are there whom one could trust on such delicate matters, trust neither to suggest, nor exaggerate, nor terrify, nor misuse their power, who would cheer and strengthen, and not confuse and paralyse and distress?

Nor, I may add, do we seem to have the slightest ground of experience in trusting to this method, here, or in other countries. Indeed, the verdict of experience in English schools would be found most unfavourable, as has been reluctantly admitted to me, more than once, by men who know what that experience is.

There may be, and are, cases, usually at a much later age, in which there is unsolicited request for advice. And advice so given may change the current of a life. But, as a general method, it is not less wrong and impracticable than the proposal to give general physiological instruction.

Between these two extremes lies the method which is generally adopted at the Great Schools with more or

less of care and completeness, varying from a *laissez-faire*, which is obtuse and loveless, even where it is not indifferent and coarse, to the most strenuous and effective, though unseen and almost unrecognised, influence. It consists in saying a few private words to boys when they first enter a school, and on other special occasions; in keeping a close look-out on anything that looks wrong; in associating the elder boys with the master in stopping anything that is low; and in doing all that may be done to keep up a healthy tone. A very general and vague description of a method, perhaps, scarcely up to the requirements of a scientific society; depending entirely on the persons who apply the method, and on the spirit in which they apply it.

Now, I think that, with one proviso, of which more will be said presently, this is the right method; and that the general high character of Public Schools, at the Universities and elsewhere, is due to it; and further, that the schools which fail to deserve this high character fail because they neglect it in some important particular.

Let me go through it with rather more of detail. It is very desirable that before a boy leaves home, he should be warned that he will meet with boys who have dirty and nasty ways. He must be taught to regard all dirty talk as being low and ungentlemanly, and only fit for cads. He must be told that any offence will be followed by a whipping. It is premature to make a sin of it. So few parents will do this, that it is needful for the schoolmaster to see that it is not wholly omitted. And it must be remembered that it is at the schools for the youngest boys that this is most necessary. It is

among young boys, boys under fourteen, even under eleven, that evil chiefly breeds. Over and over again, boys coming from middle class and preparatory schools will speak of the astonishing relative purity of the best Public Schools. Incredible as it may seem to those who do not know the best Public Schools, the fact is unquestionably so. The pure-minded boy is exposed to far less annoyance at a good Public School. The coarse is suppressed, intimidated, and sometimes cured. The large class of waverers who have previously joined more or less, not without qualms of conscience and some degree of disgust, in what seemed the fashion, are able to give it up.

The attitude of incessant watchfulness is difficult, because it must not be an attitude of incessant suspicion. The thought ought not to be in our minds. But we ought to watch for the slightest indications of a boy going wrong,—a look, a smile, a gesture,—and help him at the right moment. Many masters would confidently and almost indignantly assert that nothing is wrong in their schools. It is not to such that I should look for a really high standard.

The skill and judgment of a master is perhaps more shown in his power of selecting the right boys to co-operate with them, and in influencing him to do so in the right way, than in anything else. Certainly, without such co-operation, all else is vain. The tone of the school, though it may be suggested and inspired by the masters, must be independent, and dead against the faults we are discussing. It is made so, not simply by arming the older boys with authority, though this is much; it is by giving all the older and leading boys

without saying much to them, the feeling that they are working with the masters, and for the school, on the most important of all points; it is by trusting the boys, and educating them to be trustworthy.

I need scarcely say, that stern treatment of public offences is essential. In no other way can the right public tone be maintained.

Δεῖ γαρ ἀπειθοῦσι καὶ ἀφυεστέροις οὖσι κολάσεις τε καὶ τιμωρίας ἐπιτιθέναι, τοὺς δ' ἀνιάτους ὅλως ἐξορίζειν. (Arist. Eth. Nic. x. 9.)

(The whole chapter is well worth studying on this question.) They must be got rid of, and got rid of in silence.

The healthier and manlier the general tone of the school, the less power these temptations will exercise. They are bred by indolence, by luxury, by lounging, by swagger, by indifference to games and school interests, by loose literature, by want of discipline, by being bored. I do not mean that either the hard-working boy, or the athlete, or one who is both, is necessarily free from these temptations, and even these faults, but that he has some of the best safeguards and antidotes against them. His mind is occupied; he is in health; he has some self-respect. I would say to all parents of day boys as well as boarders, co-operate heartily with the schoolmaster in enforcing school games; they are essential to health, to the *esprit de corps,* and to the employment of time. If you keep your little boys away from games on all sorts of frivolous excuses, as they grow up, they will not care for games, they will not be induced to join in them, and you will regret and wonder why it should be so, why they have turned out the poor

mannish strutting creatures they are. You are exposing them to risks a thousand times worse than taking colds, or getting their shins kicked. Did you ever think what a priceless boon is the innocence of school games as a subject of conversation? You are perhaps, bored by the incessant talk about matches and runs, and place kicks, and scrimmages; you think games occupy a disproportionate share of the boy's mind. You may be thankful it is so. What do French boys talk about? Talk is one of the chief uses of games. The talk about them is more than innocent,—it is a training in politics, loyalty, patriotism, hero-worship, justice. I wish girls could have a little more of such talk. Lawn tennis is doing something for them perhaps.

The free intercourse of masters with their boys,[1] the genuine and unaffected interest they take in their games and occupations, and the general healthy tone of the masters' society, is of the highest importance. If a master is fast and coarse-minded, or even indifferent on these points, he has mistaken his profession, and the sooner he is got rid of the better.

It will be noticed that I have said little of direct religious motive: that I have laid more stress on the tone of manliness than on that of godliness. And this represents my conviction, after some experience. I have not found, nor have others told me that they have found, that direct religious teaching exercises much permanent influence on young boys in protecting and

[1] A friend writes to me, "When I first took my house, the worst offender I ever knew said to me of another boy, whom I held up to him as healthy-minded, 'I should have been all right if I had known the masters as he does.'"

rescuing them from these faults. There are some who will hear this with surprise, and a sense of despair; others may listen with something of a sneer. To the first I would say, that each age has to be educated by suitable methods,—that teaching may be good but untimely. It does seem to be indicated by experience, that it is better, with young boys, to treat these faults as disgusting than as sinful; to cure them with "kicks and contempt rather than by prayers and lectures"; to consider them as unmanly and ungentlemanly rather than as unchristian; as a disgrace to a school and to self-respect rather than as a defilement of the temple of the Holy Spirit; and even where boys grow older and begin to know what impurity really means, it is moral horror, not religious enthusiasm nor religious terror, that aids them most in resisting temptation. And though it is essential that the atmosphere of the school should be religious, in order that any mode of dealing with the evil should be effective, it is not on the religious side that the evil is best attacked. Further, I would add, that while the number of masters and elder boys who could treat them in the former way is very large, the number who could treat them in the latter way, without some considerable degree of unreality, is extremely small. And if any one doubts still, whether the highest motives would not be the most powerful if they were rightly and strongly brought before the boy at the right time and by the right person, I would ask him to weigh well the additional facts,—that the boys whose temperament specially exposes them to these faults, are usually far from destitute of religious feelings; that there is, and always has been,

an undoubted coexistence of religiosity and animalism; that emotional appeals and revivals are very far from rooting out carnal sin; and that in some places, as is well known, they seem actually to stimulate, even in the present day, to increased licentiousness; that, along with an increased immorality in society, has arisen an increased demand for stronger religious excitement; and that somehow, in our complicated nature, room is found for both; strange to say, they coexist in the same society, and even sometimes in the same individuals.

But, to those who would treat this admission with a sneer, and infer that religious motives are powerless and unsuitable in education, if not absolutely prejudicial, I must reply at somewhat greater length.

I once asked the head-master of a school, in which there is no religious teaching, his opinion as to the effects of the absence of this element from the school. He had previously been an assistant master at a Public School. He replied that he did not miss the chapel or the religious teaching for the boys at all, or very slightly. He missed the Latin verses very much more.

This was of course an epigram, and must not be taken as expressing my friend's deliberate judgment; but it is, I think, sufficiently representative to be regarded as a pointed statement of an opinion which, if not widely spread, has a good many tacit, and some open-mouthed, supporters; is is the opinion which prevails in our colonies; and I think it is worth while to direct the attention of this Society to the most important of all things connected with the practice of Education, —viz., the position that should be occupied in it by religious instruction and influence, giving these terms

the most liberal interpretation, and its connection with school morality.

I said above that, *with one proviso*, the method of dealing with immorality at our Public Schools is the best. This one proviso is, that the whole atmosphere and tone of the school, and recognizable influence of the masters, is religious. And thus I pass to the second part of my paper. The method is not distinctively religious; but, to be successful, it presupposes, both in the man and in the boy, that fear of God and that conscious service of a Master which is implied in any high sense of duty, and which constitutes the essence of religion: and they presuppose, further, a mutual understanding between master and boy, that they have this common ground, even where it is not directly appealed to. Such, at least, is my deepest conviction. I should not have much cared to address your Society on any other topic, for at the present time this surpasses all others in importance. For we schoolmasters are brought face to face with religious problems in a way that perhaps no one else is brought, unless we simply shirk them. A schoolmaster who really sympathises, feels with his boys, whatever his past mental history may have been, is compelled to think of their religious education. Many a father has been similarly compelled, unless he has been too busy to think about such things. He may have persuaded himself that he can let his own problems alone, and that he gained nothing by his own early religious teaching, fastening in memory on its transient errors rather than on its permanent effect; but put a sympathetic fatherly nature face to face with the young, and these theories

vanish like a fog,—we discover that our children, or our pupils, have inherited our own early religious instincts and feelings of need, and not our later uncertainties and compromises. There are, of course, men who are, so to speak, blind on this side. I have known men quite out of sympathy with the religious feelings of boys, and, as a consequence, with all their great ability, curiously, and otherwise inexplicably, destitute of influence. There are many doubtless, who regard such feelings, and aspirations in the boy as negligible idiosyncrasies, transient feeblenesses. But such men can only fulfil part of their functions as educators, and not the whole. An entire region, in which their influence ought to be felt, is unknown to them. Round them, among their pupils, are being worked out countless spiritual problems of which they are as unconscious as an ox. It will not, therefore, surprise me if some teachers dissent from these views. But nothing can be gained by argument with them. Ultimately, as in all educational matters, the value of religious education is to be determined by observation and experiment, and it is to this I appeal.

There is no other restraining power. Sympathy, the innate horror of doing wrong to a fellow creature ; self-respect, the innate horror of wronging ourselves, are real powers with all finer natures, but are meaningless *τῷ κατὰ πάθος ζῶντι*. It is vain—it may easily be proved—to rely on any convention of society, on good taste, on prudence, on laws, on rival and over-mastering passions. The tendency to immorality cannot be treated in an individual instance as a question of Ethics on any basis, utilitarian or hedonistic. We cannot help another

by pointing out the public condemnation of such vices, as inducing distrust in society; or the probable evil effects on the individual. These are after-thoughts, that justify on philosophical grounds an already existing morality, but do not originate it. Legislators can appeal to these principles; but no individual finds his instincts raised, his love of purity quickened, his strength increased, by an appeal to such principles.

Again, a restraining power is needed. For the gratification of passion is an intense reality, and can only be held in check by a still more intense reality. This must be physical or spiritual. It must come from the legislator, the doctor, or the teacher. The legislator can only help to diminish crime, and does not really touch the case. The motive must come from science or religion. But science gives a feeble sound. Science admits that immorality is damaging to the body,—but talks of recuperative powers, advises moderation. Science, as yet, does not speak of its effects on character. It is not in science that we are to look for a restraining power.

Again, let us observe that, as a matter of fact, the public opinion already existing in the best schools has been almost created, certainly profoundly affected, by religious influences. They make the only standard to which we can now appeal. This is undeniable. It is needless to dwell here on the effect of Arnold's teaching, or the aims of his spiritual successors. He added a new hemisphere to their work. He taught them to educate school morality through school religion. Some of them have done so. His aim and theirs ought to be the aim of the profession collectively, if experience is

to be our guide. I do not see how the abandonment of his aim can lead at last to anything but pre-Arnoldite school morality.

If any one will fairly face this problem in thought, he will be driven to the conclusion that it will be solved by the religious motive or by none. In so far as sin is the product of circumstances, we must strike at the circumstances, and every schoolmaster ought to have his wits about him, and scrutinize circumstances, as if everything depended on them: but if sin, and in so far as sin, is in human nature, it is necessary to give boys some fresh power to cope with it. If this is attainable in any degree anywhere, it is attainable in schools such as ours. Young, educated, docile, refined, public-spirited, loyal, how incomparably better is our material than that which one meets anywhere else. To give this fresh power, the power of conquering the selfishness and passions of our lower nature, is surely the aim and end of all education.

Yes; but how is it to be done? How is it even to be attempted?

We schoolmasters, who as a class are highly strung, and feel with peculiar intenseness the forces of the time, are in more danger than any other class of pressing into extremes one or other of the two axioms of education: Religion cannot be taught; Religion must be taught. We must keep both constantly in view. Religion cannot be taught. Each human soul finds it for itself. All alone, each soul weaves out its own web of truth, grows by its own inner vitality, and shares its inner life with no one. The thought should fill us with respect for each young soul around us, fill us with a

divine awe of the inaccessible depths that seem so close to us and are yet so far. But that other truth must be equally in our minds, and needs the more insisting on. As the young soul grows by its own inner vitality, so it needs its natural food, its mother's milk. The teacher can in part supply this, if he has it,—the sympathy of a living soul, the truth on which he lives. That this food is necessary and longed for,—that, when it is wanting, the education is partial and poor,—witness the great teachers of all ages. Consider one point only. Consider who those teachers are who have won the *affection* of their pupils. There is nothing else that boys love. The instinct of the young soul is true. Look at the love cherished for Arnold, for Pears, for Temple, for Moberly, for Percival, and many another,—nay, for all such men in all ages, from Socrates of Athens, to James A. Garfield of Hiram's College, U.S. Let any one who knows a great school reflect, which among the masters has the enduring affection of his boys,—not the popularity that comes of agreeable manners, or hospitality, or intellectual brilliancy, but the deeper and rarer respect and affection,—and he will find it is the man of true unassuming religious character. Of all the intellectual and moral elements which go to make a master,—the originality that does not despise method; the flexibility of mind and sternness of character; the sympathy with learners, and attitude of ever learning; the instinctive appreciation of small traits of character; the love of human souls that will count no pains too great to save a boy, that "never despairs of a lad"; the sense of duty that sustains in wearisome routine; the deep under-current of

character that makes the whole life a conscious, though often very secret, service of God,—the last is, as any wide experience will show, the most precious of all. Many a master, as he looks back and reviews the experience of his life, will find that this is the key to the position held by some of his colleagues,—a position inaccessible to him, however superior he may have justly felt himself to be to them intellectually. The experience of schoolmistresses will confirm this. The really loved mistress,—she who has influenced the whole life, whose approval is valued, whose words and memory are cherished,—she, in a word, who educates, the girl,—is the one who, to sufficient intellectual power to command respect, added a natural and transparent simplicity and truthfulness in dealing with questions of duty and of all things spiritual; who brought her heart to touch the hearts of her girls, as well as her mind to touch their minds.

Now, I regard this fact as a strong scientific testimony to what I am asserting. It is a part, a very small part, of the testimony of experience to what some one may call the usefulness of religion in education, but what I should prefer to call its proved supremacy.

The hope of education in England lies in the increasing recognition of this usefulness or supremacy; and, along with it, in a juster idea of what religion is, and what influences ought to be brought to bear on the young. It is not to be despaired of, that we schoolmasters—brought as we are face to face with facts, made more tolerant, let us hope, than some others by our associations and experience—may help to work out a solution of the religious problem of the day:

that it may be from the schools that the new Reformation may spring.

We may be certain that religion is very simple. There is endless discussion about it; there are books, societies, meetings, congresses, sermons, newspapers, without end. It is in everybody's mouth. Yet there is real danger lest we, like so many others, should never know what religion is,—lest we should never see the wood for the trees. Can we, a scientific society, close our doors for a moment against the buzz outside? Can we still the heart that already begins to beat as if drums were sounding, at the prospect of a few words on such angrily debated ground, and approach this subject as educators of the next generation of men and women that shall live in our land, with the humble desire to speak and to tolerate the simple truth?

I have already detained you long, but what I have said would be obscure, and almost valueless, unless I go on to explain what I mean by religious influence.

Religion is not the holding of certain opinions. It does not consist in certain views of difficult questions. We all agree that the kingdom of God, however we choose to express the idea, must be entered by us as little children; and little children know nothing of views or opinions. Views and opinions and creeds are not of the essence of religion; they are its superstructure. They belong to its intellectual and speculative side,—profoundly interesting to some minds, sometimes highly important, but not religion—only accessory to religion.

Religion is not identical with religious services, any more than it is with religious views. They are at once

a natural, and almost inevitable, sequel and manifestation of religion, and a stimulus to it; but they are not religion. The performance of acts of worship is only accessory to religion.

Picture, I pray you, the mind of an average schoolboy of thirteen to sixteen. What is his religion? has he none? He is, doubtless, if he is thoughtful, sore bewildered by the aspect of the world. He cannot see the wood for the trees. Who can analyse his thoughts? Not one of us. But cannot we educators, as we call ourselves, with all our experience and united wisdoms, help such a boy? Have the past ages absolutely no resultant experience in which all can agree? Must we tell him that we too, or perhaps that every one else except our own particular selves, are as much in the dark as he; that we are not quite sure whether there is any religion; and that, as the *Daily News* said the other day, in speaking about schools in Wales, "It is far better to leave religion to be taught by parents and clergymen." It is *our* fault that the *Daily News* should have to say this, that religion should have come to mean what the *Daily News* means by the word.

The religion of a boy means, learning what duty is, and caring much and always for it. All else is accessory, this alone is of the essence. This is also the religion of a man. Shall we leave this to parents and clergymen? Can we do nothing to help our boys, who are with us during so many of those years in which they imbibe most of the principles of life, to learn from all noble examples and lofty words what duty is, and to care much and always for doing their duty?

We possess the ear and attention of a boy during all

those years when his aspirations rise highest, when the power of conscience is strongest, and that of passion weakest, when reverence is most natural, when goodness and greatness are most inspiring, when the range of future duties and possibilities is most unlimited, when high public spirit finds its most appropriate sphere, before the pressure of care can have driven out all thoughts that kindle, and habitual hardening sins can have dulled all spiritual life. We have the opportunities of teaching boys their duties in their widest sense. What is our education worth, if we leave all this side of it neglected? Who can deny that we ought to educate our boys in self-respect and thoroughness and modesty and purity and singleness of mind as positive duties? or in self-culture and diligence? or in public spirit and helpfulness and love? or in reverence and unworldliness? It is at the age at which boys are with us that these ideas are most easily assimilated, at which boys delight to hear of them; for boys prefer nobleness and goodness to everything else. This, too, is the time for warning them against the faults of vanity and cowardice and aimlessness, against littleness of mind and coarseness; and that by such analysis and sympathy as come home to them and help them. If this is religion, if the master can really help his boys to this, shall we put it rather below Latin Verses as an element in education? Or shall we say that these things are best not spoken of: let the boys copy them, if they can see them, in silence: let the only voices they hear be such as are wafted to them by chance, or sought by their own unguided will?

I say, then, that a school is only performing half its

duties if it does not so educate its boys; if it does not enable and induce its masters, not clergy only, but lay also, to bring their very best and loftiest influence to bear on the school; if it does not thoroughly bring out the best side of the best members of the staff. These great moral or religious ideas, and such as these, must come within the sphere of ordinary school education. They can do this without being entered on the time-table. It should be our aim to transmit to the young the best thoughts and aspirations of the best of the generation above them, and so aid in the progressive development of the nation in all that is good. We must not rule all this department as outside our sphere. We must claim it as within the province of every school, from the Board School upwards; and if we can claim it temperately, and use our opportunities wisely, no one will deny the value of the teaching.

It is astonishing how much of life is left outside the sphere of education. Our teaching stops short at almost all points of the needs of real life. It would be easy to dilate on this. The education of the Greeks and Romans aimed, at any rate, at the requirements of actual life. Ours is more than ever antiquarian and elementary. Except incidentally, we teach no political philosophy, no physiological philosophy, no ethical philosophy; in a word, no science of individual or social life. Each generation faces its problem afresh: the young mind is not brought into contact with the thought of the generation above, except by books which lie quite outside the line of education, and on which we give no guidance. In old times, the education of a youth was to put him with a tutor, a sage if possible,

one impregnated with learning and thought, and so by the intellectual and moral contagion to develop the youth's latent power. Of that there is little now. What I plead is, that religious instruction in schools is almost the only remnant left of this education of the inner man, that brings the very soul of the pupil and the sage—if he exists—into contact. To hold this cheap, to put it a little below Latin Verses, is a proof of a most inadequate notion of what the actual capacities and effects of religious teaching are, of its width and depth even now, and still more what it may be in future; or a deadness and blindness to one whole region of the human soul, a limited conception of it as an examinable, and more or less intelligent, entity.

"But is this teaching to be merely hortatory or theological?" I hear asked; for this makes all the difference.

Well, I reply, religion is the caring for duty in all its varied aspects of self-culture, duties to others, duties to God; and it is a subordinate, though very important question, what help we shall use in bringing this religion home to boys. We must use those helps we truly find most effective ourselves, being perpetually on our watch against unreality and self-deception. The natural consequences of sin impress one man; the elevating charms of greatness and goodness move another; the inspiration of public spirit is a power with a third; another finds his inspiration in the life and example of Jesus Christ. To one the inner voice of conscience; to another the voice of the Bible; to another the teaching of Nature: each finds a revelation somewhere. All will teach one religion, the religion of

caring for duty, though they may differ in the motive they apply. One whose whole nature is sceptical to his heart's core, sceptical on the use of all these helps equally, may yet be thoroughly religious; and he may do good service if he will enlist himself on this side, and not permit himself to be driven into opposition. One who doubts, and on speculative grounds would deny, all that most men who are called religious hold as truths, may feel keenly the duties of life, may care much and care always for them, and be a hearty ally in all true and noble education, if he will loyally help in this its highest aim. But this implies that he will extend to others the toleration that is extended to him. He must not condemn as useless and false what others find useful and true helps. In a word, he, and all of us, must care supremely for the end, and be modest in judgment about the means.

One will speak in one tone, and another in another; but what I want to insist on is, that the Ethical side of all our Education is in danger of being crushed out by conventional reticence and tacit abandonment; and that this is a mistake of the highest order. We have lost sight of the true perspective. The old division of Educational Subjects, adopted in the schools of the Stoics, was Physics, Logic, Ethics. And it stands as sound as ever. Still men have to learn the basis of facts, physical, social, political, on which life is based; still men need the training in logic and language which shall enable them to grapple with facts and construct sound theories; and still they need the application of theories to the concrete facts of their own life. Life is not long enough to deal with the vast array of sciences

that now come under these three heads; the first, alone, bewilders our generation: but I plead that the third, in its modern form, which is practical, sensible, religious teaching, shall not be ignored and quietly turned out by our modern theorists and practitioners in Education. It is not to be placed below Latin Verses.

I have said that the modern form of Ethics is practical religious teaching. It is true that the lines of ethical and religious thought have different origins; but they converged once under the mighty influence of early Christian philosophy, and, if now once more separated, that separation is not necessary, and signs of convergence are not wanting. But this is a subject for an essay in itself, and I will not enter on it.

Few, I imagine, whatever their speculative conclusions may be, do not feel the attractive power of that grand ideal life which they may think existed only in the imagination of the writers of the Gospels, but which others believe to have been truly divine. Those who do so believe it, find in the service of that master the greatest help to religion. *Help*, I say, to religion, because it helps them to see their duties, to care for them, and to do them. Let no one say this who does not, from his soul, believe it; but let no one deny the existence of a help which he cannot himself use. Let us schoolmasters, at any rate, with our high calling ever in view, work together in any way we can to implant great aims, powerful motives, purity of life in our boys; and let us, supremely caring for our great aim, never try and discredit the means our brothers use. Rather let us be honourable rivals in our work, and be ready,

on all sides, to admit that where the fruit is good there the tree is good. He that is not against us is for us.

And let all whom it concerns know, that in school is a field for noble work, and for the expression of their best selves. School work may be elevated far above the region of gerund-grinding and drudgery, to one who, in his gerund-grinding and drudgery—which are very real and necessary—sees the opportunity for that intellectual contact from which permanent religious influence springs. A schoolmaster need not be a brilliant speaker, for his power rests on what is deeper than eloquence, the transparent principles of a life lived in the sight of his hearers.

We are to leave religion, says the *Daily News*, to parents and to clergymen,—and thus deliberately cut it off from the reality it gets from its association with other teaching; sacrifice that inspiration to goodness and duty, which comes only in early years, and comes most effectually from a voice which also kindles by its intellectual fire.

Let the very opposite be the view of all who take a wide and thoughtful view of education as the work of implanting in schools what we wish to see reproduced in the life of the nation. Let our highest aim be, to put before our boys the life of duty, in all its width and depth, and inspire them, if it may be, with the love of it; and let our most earnest thoughts be devoted to finding the most effectual helps, whether in regulations and discipline, or in admonition and literature, for accomplishing this aim. And let it be part of the work of our Society, which claims so lofty a name as the Education Society, to observe faithfully and record truly what methods and helps are best.

To this end I have contributed this paper, of whose lamentable shortcomings no one is so conscious as myself. I have, however, attempted to describe what methods I have observed to be most effectual in promoting a healthy tone of morality in a school,—viz., in brief, great care in arrangements, the hearty co-operation of elder boys, sternness in dealing with the fault, full occupation of time and thoughts with many interests, and a general treatment of the subject most earnest indeed, but which would commonly and rightly be called non-religious, based however on a strong undemonstrative religious tone pervading the whole life of the school. I need not, before such an audience, emphasize my conviction that it should be a life of action, not of talk and ceremonial; in other words, that it should be a life which aims at the result, and shows the result, and is not so incessantly occupied with one particular set of means that the end is lost sight of. In this you will agree with me.

But it is, perhaps, more necessary to emphasize here, that for my part I see no argument from experience—to which we all appeal—in favour of secularism, though secularism may be, I admit, a religion, as Stoicism was. My own personal conviction, based, as I believe, on facts alone, is that morality cannot become religious, that is, be penetrated with the love of duty, and so secured, without the sense of service of a Divine Master. This is a subject which I feel it would be inappropriate to handle here.

Finally, let me sum up very briefly. Don't bring religion into this cloacinal region of morals prematurely. Treat the fault with moral horror, silence, and

great sternness; and get your boys to work with you. Look after the conditions, physical and social, that all is healthy. But let religion, a stern and eager love of duty, be the tone of the school, or all else fails; and the best help to religion, I believe the only help, is what I have just briefly indicated.

And now, with two more remarks, I will at last conclude. First, let me say that the distinctive doctrines of the Church and many of the Sects are utterly unimportant at schools, and everywhere. No genuine schoolmaster in any rank can for an instant digress from his religious teaching into such debatable ground; it is one of the stupendous and far-reaching blunders that the world outside our profession makes, when they say that masters cannot be trusted to speak on religion, because they would proselytize. We have no time to proselytize, even if we had the wish. It is to misconceive the nature of the only possible religious teaching at school.

And lastly this. The great change in education going on before the eyes of this generation, is the gradual passing away of education out of the hands of the clergy into the hands of the laity. What I would say, then, to laity and clergy alike is, See that the element of religion is not thereby eliminated. Religion is not the peculiar province of the clergy. I do not see that clerical masters are more religious than lay. If I were to name the twelve best living schoolmasters that I know, merit being estimated in the way that you now know I should estimate them, two only are in orders. The speaker is neither of those. And this leads me to deprecate one criticism, and one only, on this paper,—

that it should be said that I have been describing my own estimate of my own attempts. Say, rather, a vision sometimes seen, oftener forgotten, suggested by the work of others: a vision which may be useful to some of you. But, to resume. If education has passed, or is passing, out of the hands of the clergy, if you rejoice in what you may call its emancipation, and I see no necessary reason for regretting it,—then see that you do not repudiate the responsibility you inherit, nor leave untrained those faculties which you deemed mistrained before. Let it be our business as schoolmasters, to make our school, in a higher sense than ever before, places of true religious education.

With this thought in our minds, let us go back to the great saying of Von Humboldt, "Whatever we wish to see introduced into the life of a nation must be first introduced into its schools."

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